

BASEBALL WORKOUT PROGRAMS



Phase 1 - Develop Foundational Strength

Circuit training is excellent format for this phase of a baseball weight training program. At this stage THE most important objective is to balance and prepare the body for an excellent season. Training can be less specific to baseball but it's a good idea to incorporate some exercises that match the demands of the sport.

Time year: Early pre-season

Duration: 4-8 weeks

Days per week: 2-3 (Leave 24hrs between sessions)

Load: Bodyweight or 50-60% 1 rep max

Reps: 15-20

Circuits: 2-3

Rest interval: 30 secs between exercises

Rest interval: 2-3 mins between circuits

The last few reps on each station should be taxing. When you can comfortably perform the number of reps suggested increase the weight.

1. Squat to Presses x 12-15 *
2. Single Arm Dumbbell Rows x 12 (each arm)
3. Bent Knee Sit Ups x 20
4. Push-Ups x 15-20
5. Fast Feet on Box x 90 seconds *
6. Barbell Upright Rows x 15
7. Supermans x 20 *
8. Dumbbell Forward Lunges x 10 (each leg)
9. Burpees x 15 *
10. Oblique Crunches x 20 *

* - exercise description on next page.

Exercise Descriptions

Squat to Presses

Holding a relatively light dumbbell in each hand by your side, squat down until your knees are bent just above 90 degrees. As you extend your legs push the dumbbells overhead and extend your arms fully. Lower the weights as you squat down again.

Fast Feet on Box

Use a sturdy box or aerobic step. Step on and off quickly making sure both feet come into contact with the box. Every 20 or 30 step-ups change your feet so the opposite leg leads.

Supermans

1. Start position: Lie face down on floor with hands down at sides. You may place a rolled towel under forehead to clear face from floor.
2. Raise chest and head off floor keeping feet in contact with floor. To increase resistance, extend arms out in front like superman.
3. Do not raise head past 8-12 inches - excessive hyperextension may cause injury. To vary exercise raise feet while raising trunk.

Forward Lunges

1. Start by standing with your feet shoulder width apart.
2. Step forward with one foot and bend your knees into a lunged position. Your back knee should come close to touching the ground and your front leg should be bent to about 90 degrees at the knee.
3. Maintain your upright posture throughout the movement. Return to the starting position and repeat on the opposite leg.
4. If you have them, hold a light dumbbell in either hand.

Burpees

1. Start in a standing position and bend your knees and place your hands on the ground.
2. Extend your legs back into a push up position. Bring your knees back in towards chest and stand back up.
3. This should be a continuous motion and be fluid.

Oblique Crunch

1. Start by placing your left foot over your right knee and place your hands behind your head.
2. Lift your shoulders up off the ground and twist so that your right elbows tries to touch your left knee.
3. Return to the starting position and repeat according to the required repetitions.
4. Repeat with the other side.

Phase 2 - Developing Maximal Strength

Training for maximum strength requires experience and a good foundation of strength. Because it includes the use of heavier weights ideally you should have someone to spot you. Do NOT jump straight to this phase in the baseball weight training program. It's only effective if you stay injury free and the best way to do that is to prepare and balance the body first with a foundational program - even if you're an experienced lifter.

Time year: Mid pre-season

Duration: 6 weeks

Days per week: 3 (leave 24-48hrs between sessions)

Load: 80-90% 1 rep max

Reps: 4-8

Sets: 3-5

- 1. Squats/Leg Presses - 3sets x 6-8reps**
- 2. Bench Presses 3sets x 6-8reps**
- 3. Leg Curls - 3sets x 10reps**
- 4. Dumbbell Overhead Presses 3sets x 6-8reps**
- 5. Calf Raises - 3sets x 8-10reps**
- 6. Wide Grip Pull Downs - 3 sets x 6-8reps**
- 7. Weighted Crunches - 3 sets x 10-15reps**

Phase 3 - Conversion to Power

In this third phase of the baseball weight training program, the preparation and gains made over the previous few months are converted into baseball specific strength and power.

The movement patterns in throwing, hitting and sprinting short distances are sharp and explosive. Increased strength alone won't make a dramatic impact on your performance. **Being able to apply that strength quickly will.**

The emphasis now moves away from heavy, near-maximum load, to lighter resistance that you can move **explosively**. If the weight is too heavy, the movements will be slow and you'll fail to make the neural adaptations that are important in power development.

The program below uses some **plyometric exercises**. This is not the only method to develop power but it is effective. Plyometric training can be deceptively tough. It won't leave you out of breath or fatigued...

In fact you may end the sessions feeling like you need to do more. Don't! Don't compare this type of training with maximal strength training which does leave you feeling fatigued.

Time year: Late pre-season

Duration: 4 weeks

Days per week: 2-3

Load: Bodyweight, medicine ball or 50-60% 1 rep max

Reps: 8-12

Sets: 2-3

1. Lateral Jumps 3 x 10 (bodyweight)

1. Stand alongside a bench, box or cone approximately 30cm high.
2. Keeping your feet hip distance apart jump sideways as high over the obstacle as possible.
3. Immediately jump back to the start position minimising ground contact time. This counts as one repetition.
4. You can use anything to jump over, a training top or even just a line on a track. Just make sure you discipline yourself to jump as high as possible.

2. Plyometric Push-Ups 3 x 10 (bodyweight)

Same as a regular push-up except as you extend your arms push up explosively so your hands leave the ground. Then allow your elbows to bend slightly to absorb the shock as you land. Lower and repeat. A variation of this exercise is to quickly clap your hands as they are in the air.

3. Depth Jumps 3 x 10 (bodyweight)

1. Stand on a box, bench or sturdy chair approximately 30-40cm high.
2. Step off the bench (don't jump off) and as soon as you land explode vertically as high as you can.
3. Try to minimise ground contact time i.e. don't sink down into a deep squat before jumping up.

4. Pull Over Throw 3 x 10 (medicine ball)

1. Lying on your back with knees bent, have your partner stand about 10 feet away.
2. Hold a medicine ball directly over your chest with your arms extended.
3. With your arms still extended, lower the ball behind your head as far as you can... if you can touch the floor with the ball great!
4. From this position throw ball forward toward your feet releasing it when your arms are over your chest and abdomen.
5. Have your partner pass the ball back to you and repeat.

5. Dumbbell Squats w/ Rotational Swings 3 x 10

1. Start position: Holding a dumbbell in each hand start in squatted position with dumbbells between legs.
2. Start movement by standing up and keeping arms straight rotate shoulders and trunk towards the left.
3. Return to the starting position and repeat to the other side.
4. Repeat for the prescribed number of repetitions.

6. Reverse Curls 3 x 12 (medicine ball)

1. Start position: Lie with back on floor or bench with hips flexed at 90° and feet in air holding onto a medicine ball. Position arms at sides with palms down on floor.
2. Leading with the heels towards the ceiling, raise glutes (butt) off floor or bench.
3. Return to start position.
4. Remember keep legs from swinging to prevent momentum throughout the exercise.

7. Alternating Squats w/ Press 3 x 10

1. Start by holding a dumbbell in each hand at shoulder level.
2. Squat down to about parallel and explode up to a standing position.
3. Once you have squatted half way up then starting pressing the dumbbells over your head.
4. Use the momentum from your squat to propel the dumbbells above your head. Remember to stay in control of the dumbbells at all times.

8. Side Throws 3 x 10 (medicine ball)

1. Stand side on, with your partner about 20 feet to your left. Keeping feet shoulder width apart and knees bent place your right foot slightly in front of your left.
2. Hold a medicine ball with both hands directly in front of you. Keep your arms extended and parallel to the floor.
3. Swing ball as far to the right as is comfortable allowing your hips to turn with your arms. From this position...
4. Immediately swing the ball to your left throwing the ball to your partner.
5. Repeat for the desired number of repetitions and then repeat for the other side to complete one set.

Two plyometric/power sessions per week is ample and you should leave 48hrs between sessions. You can, if you want, do one maximal strength training session in between - perhaps on Wednesdays if plyometric sessions are performed on Mondays and Fridays.

In Season Baseball Weight training

During the competitive season the aim is to maintain both an adequate level of maximal strength and explosive power. Because it takes less to maintain a level of fitness than it does to develop it, you can cut your strength training sessions down to once or twice per week.

Avoid weight training the day before a game (ideally leave it 2 days before). You might want to perform one strength session per week and one power session. Or you could combine some of the exercises into one session per week depending on your time commitments.

Following the end of the competitive year, give your body a break.

A couple of weeks off from baseball weight training is fine but rather than do nothing all through out the winter/off-season months, do some light circuit training. Nothing too intense and try to incorporate muscles and exercises you feel might get neglected during the season. Don't worry too much about sets and reps and weights (keep 'em light though)